

A DISCOURSE,

BY DANIEL PARKER, M. D.

IS INTERCOURSE BETWEEN THE NATURAL AND
SPIRITUAL WORLDS ANY LONGER NECESSARY?

(From the New England Spiritualist.)

"With respect to intercourse between the natural and spiritual-worlds, Mr. Beecher said that the old Testament was full of it as well as the new; that if it occurred then, it occurred under the operation of a law and that law was as fully in existence now as it ever was. The necessity for such intercourse did not seem to be great at the present time, with all our advancement, our printing presses and accumulations of knowledge but the law and possibility remained the same."—H. W. Beecher.

It seems by this, that Mr Beecher, admits the *possibility* of spiritual intercourse, but that the necessity for such intercourse did not seem to be very great at the present time. Let us see how the case stands with regard to the necessity of the matter. When men like him publicly recommend the use of the *Sharp's rifles* as moral suasionists, better than all Bibles, tracts or sermons; does there seem to be small necessity for any thing which shall tend to arouse and quicken man's consciousness of spiritual realities? When he admitted the *possibility*, did he duly consider the *probability* and necessity for such intercourse? Did he duly consider how "all our advancements, our printing pressess and accumulations of knowledge" had taken us mammonward and devilward, and into all manner of impossibilities of God-worship? When men, manners and customs are, as he graphically portrays them, as impervious as wild "buffaloes" to Bibles and Testaments, and only pervious to moral arguments in the shape of ground steel and rifle-bullets, is it not a suitable time for spirits to thunder and lighten, knock persecutors off their horses, bring them to some sense of propriety, and set them to laboring for holier things? If the Bible fails to christianize, or even to make men good and moral, is it not time for the spiritual world to institute some measures to lead to such a desirable result? It seems to me that spiritual intercourse was never more necessary to harmonize, and enlighten the world; and than the present, there never was a more fit, appropriate and necessitous time.

Admit all we can of the progress of the species; the developement of man; of progress in arts, science, literature, religion and life; it is plain enough that the world is but feebly illumined yet. Thick and dark cloud, still impenetrable to the spiritual sun light of the heavens, float over humanity, and screen intercourse with the spiritual world.

When men cannot bear to be told of the marriage of the material and spiritual worlds; that there is unspeakable joy, extacy and life-expansion in the commingling of men and angels; they should see the hand, hear the "voice from heaven."

When dark and cheerless materialism fixes a great and impassable gulph between heaven and earth, over which no eye can reach or winged messenger float from realms of life and light; when the glimmerings from the spirit-land are so faint that only the poorest semblance of a material God is visible; when clergymen argue that, hearkening to "what the spirit saith," implies folly, insanity and fanaticism; when our practical men and women discard all faith in inspiration less than two thousand years old; when the dollar-and-cent philosophy becomes "the one thing needful," and the future an unimaginable something or nothing; is it not time for the spirits to rap loud and long?

Surely, when men sneer at the idea that spiritual beings walk the earth and "keep watch and ward" whilst we are sleeping, and call such but the offsprings or creations of visionary brains and overwrought fancies, all nonsense and moonshine, — it seems to me there is some "necessity" for spiritual communications to counteract their misconceptions, and bring them to a knowledge of the truth as now proclaimed from all the Sinais in the universe.

To them, whatsoever comes not under the cognizance of some one or more of the five senses (and not always then), has no existence. To them the past seems very good, and such they would have us let alone. It had its inspired prophets, and wise men, and greater than these there need not be. Its history of great empires and conquerors, costly heathen temples, gorgeous worships, huge pyramids and palaces, great sages and saints, they think good enough for all time. What better need have we? Inspiration commenced and ended there, and the record is our master. Humanity therein was all developed, and such no more can be.

Not so. The like of whatsoever has been, can be again. If spirits could speak to Paul, they can speak to Channings, Beechers, Edmondsses, Hares and others, with equal propriety and benefit. Surely humanity is to-day sufficiently in need of Saviours and revelations, notwithstanding what it may have had of such in past times. Discord is every where uppermost, and humanity is trodden under foot, and disgraced. Humanity as a whole has not yet lived — has scarcely begun to live — and its ascension is in the future. Knowledge will come and take the place of its blind faith. It will yet have its day and development, when it will not have to ask its taskmaster for permission to think, or for gingerbread-money for a holiday. It will not always be crushed and crippled by "divine-right" rulers who claim its overseership. No! Let the spirits rap, and move and "break things," if need be, till Humanity is liberated from thralldoms worse than death was ever supposed to be.

Though this is an age of "printing presses," "advancement and accumulations of knowledge," with steam power and electrical communications, yet the chains of slavery and servitude still dwarf the souls of the masses, and they are not men. Rulers are not yet wise and honest, nor are governments for the governed, good. Parties are selfish and unprincipled, and philanthropy weeps whilst place and power shift from one flock of commorants to another.

Long enough has been tried the slow and uncertain process of renovating the earth by church-establishments, alms-giving, tariffs, and cotton-jenneys. It will never do. Poverty, with its parched mouth, will throng the soup-house with ever-increasing clamor, whilst from its dark, damp and dismal abodes, will spread pestilence and death. Denying relationship, and tossing shillings to the poor, confers small benefits. The law of love must exhibit itself in quite other forms than these. When Church and state can furnish seats, privileges and honors only for the rich, spiritual, and perhaps other manifestations become necessary to open prison doors and let the oppressed go free.

So too, when millions lie powerless in ignorance, groaning in nightmare sleep, with the bandogs of slavery seated upon their souls, what else can rouse our rulers from their torpid and death like conservatism? What else can arouse them to a sense of duty towards the dark minds of ignorance so audibly groaning under

multitudinous despotisms? Moral suasion, with all its appliances, has failed thus far. The multitude is yet jubilant and abject in its hero worship and praise of selfish and unprincipled demagogues, and with cap in hand, shout lustily their praises of men-butchers and stealers. Would not a voice to it, like unto the one that Balaam heard be of some service? Is there not equal "necessity?"

Do not the practical workings of society show that its faith is weak, and that its reverence for the old is inefficient? Do not the multitudinous absurd and conflicting theological opinions of society show that voices from heaven might come as appropriately now as ever? Indeed could such ever come amiss? Has any thing, but the ignorance and superstitions of men, ever prevented a free and uninterrupted intercourse between the material and spiritual worlds, in any age or stage of human development? Such intercourse is according to "natural laws," and of course always operative under suitable conditions.

What shall we say then to the clergyman reduced to the necessity of recommending *'Sharps rifles'* as a basis for moral suasion, doubting the "necessity" of such intercourse? Think of it!

Blessed be God, we say, for any speech from the spirit-land which tells of change for the better; for any revelations to do away the idolatrous worship of the world, and bring it to a knowledge of the great positive Good, the Supreme, the All; to bring man to a knowledge of himself and his relationship to men and things. Let the spirits rap till they knock off the scales that have encrusted men, like the ore in the mines, and bring out the lustre of the real metal. Let them rap and talk till they dispel all fear, that terrible foe to all progress; that impelling power that has forever driven mankind every way but the right; that has collected mighty armies, concocted revolutions, deluged the earth with blood, fire, and a hell of grievances. Let them come and rap, till love and truth are revered, and men cease to crucify their Redeemers,—till there comes a blending of humanity with truth and righteousness, and a harmonious sojourning together ever ready to assist in storm or sunshine, sickness or health, with purity and manliness of heart, such as every where finds, and enjoys communion with God,—till men can stand under the broad canopy of Heaven unmolested, and undisturbed by mythology, and there under the influence of the electricity of God's Truth learn that Nature's Divine Revelations are too numerous and mighty to be all contained in books, ancient or modern, and that—

"Those are true books which like good glasses show
Truths larger than their leaves can hold, or know,"

—till men are tired and sick of looking back, through the long, thorny and dark avenues of the ages, where humanity is seen wandering in wildernesses, or moving in long and glittering files, and its martial ram's-horns and trumpets, and clanging steel, and muffled drums, beating death-marches to its battle grounds and graves, where it stands in long lines and squares, and curves, with clenched teeth, and quivering flesh, awaiting the crash of the battle axe, and the hewing to pieces of the flesh—till they are tired of trying to penetrate the thick dust clouds covering the belligerents through all of the fog-bewildered centuries of olden time, to glean a scrap or two of truth, warning and wisdom from its patriarchs and prophets.

Is there no necessity for spiritual messengers to remind us of.

"The new commandment with the *ten* of old,"

whilst oppression, with its iron heel, strides roughshod over humanity; and crushed hopes, torn hearts and perished souls all lie prostrate and he pless, faint, weary and sorrowful, as it pursues its unrelenting course? Shall they not rap to order, whilst vile and altogether devilish despotism, brute-force, hellish passions, death-grapples, bondage and dungeons are all conspicuous, and hold fearful and relentless sway over the birthrights of men and women, and the Kings and Priests of

the world take counsel of Egypt, Greece and Rome? Shall they not thunder into our ears the law of love when rivers of blood run from Sevastopols whose walls are plastered thick with human brains, and heaven and earth moving moanings and wallings from widows and orphans rise with smoke-clouds from sacked and burning cities and villages? Could they be more worthily or profitably employed?

Shall they not give us manifestations of better things, when the world is full of crazy jargon about God and Christ; the creation of the earth; the destiny of man; the resurrection of the body; salvation by grace; penance; the torments of purgatory; about the efficacy of prayers and pilgrimages; the efficacy of oil, water, "winking" madonnas and wooden crosses; about the origin of evil, total depravity, infinite sin, the atonement, and whatever else can excite stupid and blind concession and reverence, and keep the soul forever languishing in "mumps and measles?"

Have the angels not wept long enough in *silence* over the terrible life-battle of the over-burdened millions, dustily and wearily groping their way to rest in unhonored graves?

Is the light sufficiently luminous from "printing presses" and pulpits, when "Uncle Toms" are whipped to death, and great multitudes languish in servility to the biddings of despots; when those are toilworn and crushed, ministering to the caprices and whims of the idle and pleasure-seeking few; when godless taskmasters legislate men into bondage; and unrequited sweat, and groans, and tears, into heart-broken and despairing prostration? All the beloved say no, and seek instruction from discourses on the "Higher Law," by the "just made perfect."

What is the necessity? what is the use? the clergymen say. Is not our preaching good enough? Why does it not harmonize the world, then? One, who occupies no subordinate position in the clerical ranks, said, not many years since, that an attempt to put the fundamental principles of Christianity into practice, would raise more noise than could be raised by any other means; and that, too, right in the midst of the fairest portions of God's heritage. The same now recommends, and I do not say unrighteously, Sharp's rifles as way-pavers for moral suasion and the Bible.

But progress will be slow. It is hard to dismiss all longings for the flesh-pots of Egypt. Men everywhere say, "the presumption is against any thing new." Men have so long looked upon humanity as fallen, depraved, and debased, that any thing tending to exalt and ennoble it, has small chance of success, or may be fearfully looked upon as tending to subvert order, religion and government. Men look doubtingly at, and set their faces against, what they cannot readily understand, especially if it militates against their perceptions of theology, morals and religion. All science and philosophy above these, is mysterious, if not ridiculous. The world has faith enough in the manifestations of great boxers, giant wrestlers and fighters; but as yet, very little in those of philanthropists and peace-makers. Men with great difficulty rid themselves of the influences of circumstances about them, enough to look new facts and theories in the face, and read their import and tendencies. He must be strong and great who can withstand the prejudices and opinions of men, — resist customs, habits and tailors, — "forsake father and mother," and contend manfully for truth and righteousness. Concession, or compromise, is better than resistance to evil, and darkness is better than light, for weak-eyed conservatism.

On the whole, then, it is clear, that the world is not so good as to need no further revelations, or aid from inspiration and clairvoyance. Governments are not for the poor and weak, rather than for the rich and strong; nor is law, *justice*. Religion has not yet rid itself of superstition and intolerance; nor has love to God and man, as yet brought any thing like "peace on earth." The world is yet filled with tones of contention, around which war-dogs growl and fight. Churches

are yet stumbling-stones whereat the poor wait, groan and hunger in vain for gospel preaching. Eighteen hundred years they have been prescribing their moral medicines, and so long waiting in vain for their desired effects. Their whole pharmacopœia of endless compounds have been thoroughly administered to very little *good* effect. The body and soul of humanity is still saturated with disease, over which these remedies are nearly powerless. Is it not time to try different remedies, pharmacopœios and physicians? Humanity is fast verging to marasmus and paralysis on its old diet, regimen and remedial agents, periodically prescribed by incompetent and discordant doctors.

The Church has blocked up the avenues to progress, and kept the world as much as possible at a stand-still. Then shall the spirits not come again proclaiming anew their glad tidings to the world?

In spite of all Colleges and Churches, Popes, Bi-shops, and Priests, "scepticism is the upas tree under which the world lies in syncope and paralysis, for which French Revolutions, Waterloo Battles, choking and hangings, are poor remedies." The law of love, charity, sympathy, and universal brotherhood, is nowhere yet acknowledged amongst the nations. One man is born to wealth and education, whilst hundreds come empty-handed, and bend their naked backs to his burdens—mere animal serfs, chained to ignorance and beggary. Cruel and sanguinary punishments are according to law, and every where we hear the growlings of the scrambling and snatching process, in the rough-and-trumble struggle for dear life. The world is yet in bondage, though the cock-crowing for the dawning of the day of its redemption has been heard. Luxury and wealth loll lazily upon its ottomans, with downy appliances and kid-glove cup-bearers, side by side with abject poverty and wretchedness, misery, starvation and death, with no care or effort to quiet its life-long moanings and tribulations. Now what light is there, except it come from the spiritual Sun, through spirit-messengers, to illumine the dark dens of soul-crushed degradation and vice that society everywhere builds? What cheerful-faced tokens meet us with words of encouragement that there shall come an end of universal cheating and robbing? that there shall be laws and justice for the weak, and a right to seat and equal chances at creation's dining-table, *by any other means*? None. The spirits must bind the trembling jailers, open the prison doors, knock off the shackles and set the bondmen free.

These means can do what others never can,
Make God a God, and make of man, a man.

Is it not time, and is there not plenty of "necessity" that such measures should have a fair trial, since others so signally fail in all such endeavors? Think of it awhile! Are there other preachers who can discourse to us so encouragingly of the ultimates of the reign of sin and error drawing to a close, and of the millennium moving on from the confines of chaos, and the speedy approach of the reign of the Prince of Peace, when all the nations of the earth shall be so far healed of their outheaded sin-fever sickness, as to forget to repeat their insane shouts of "crucify him! crucify him!" Are there any others who can so certainly lead us out of darkness into marvellous light, and effect the deliverance of humanity from serfdom and bondage.

Look at it as you will, this world-wide bondage, degradation and misery of men, is a very serious business; and, to me makes manifest enough the "necessity" for more "light from Heaven" in such manner as Heaven chooses to dispense it. If the old light has grown dim and uncertain,—only sufficient to establish a "blind faith" in immortality, then, in God's name, let us hail with raptures any demonstrations which will allow us to exchange that for *positive knowledge*. When we *know* the way, we can go in it, and feel much safer than in lingering and halting between faith and doubting, listening to such teachers as do *not* know it. Life, at best, it would seem, has troubles, trials and difficulties enough to make it to the best of us, something besides a holiday. What then must it be

to the dumb millions enduring all manner of grievances, and unbearable burdens? No manner of play is that to work the sinews of one's soul and body all sore in "negro cloth," on swine-diet, and no pay; to sleep on cabin floors, with crazy incubuses, where all the music of one's life is beat out of a bango. To such, would demonstrations and manifestations from above, to show that there is a God and spirit-life somewhere in the universe, be out of place, or unnecessary? "No God is here!" too many well may say, and will say unless knowledge of Him comes to them in a different way than through its accustomed channels. A man choking to death in a bitter dead sea of devilish injustice, wants other "benefits" than these of the clergy; and unless the signs are deceptive, he is in a fair way to get them, even if the "necessity" is not so perceptible to some. This dying by inches all one's lifetime, is wretched business, let what will come of it. Multitudes are reduced to coarse and scanty fare, to soup-house dispensations, damp cellar accommodations, and often, like the Irish widow, to the necessity of dying of typhus fever and infecting whole districts: thus demonstrating the universal brotherhood of man. Now, is there no "necessity" that there should be other, and less afflictive demonstrations of such relationship, even if the spirits have to come and rap them out on our tables and chairs or give us long messages through mediums, by "od" or other forces? Let them rap and talk till we come to a knowledge and practical working of the true philosophy, to remedy all this unmanhoodizing of man — till righteousness come right side up, and humanity can stand erect in the sunlight of heaven, enjoying its birthrights, and its heaven-ordained privileges at creation's dining-tables. Let them come and speak through trumpets and other instruments, till our mammon-worship, and devil-take-the-hindmost principles cease to drive humanity mad, and pack it into insane hospitals, State prisons, reform schools, houses of industry, dark damp and pestilence-breeding cellars and cabins — till church and state eschew their corruptions, and the sins of the market-places become of less might than sufficient to sink the land — till cheating and robbing cease to be the chief end of man — till the inequalities and miseries of the world cease to petrify one's brains and heart, and set at defiance all faith in the existence of a just "Father who is in heaven" — till the moral sense of the community ceases to be pained by the wickedness of governments and rulers, and *Sharp's rifles* — till revolutions of wrath and destruction, chattering bone-manure heaps over the battle-plains of the world — till all falsehoods have been extinguished, and with them all wicked laws, by which men have been swindled and robbed of their inheritances, kicked, cuffed and sent sorrowful away to their bunks of straw. There they are, and there let God send his messengers, select the fishermen and make them apostles of better things.

Yes, this poor down-trodden humanity is experiencing a leveling up to higher planes, and better fare; to freedom and the light of truth and knowledge. Courage then, my brother! "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof," though it sometimes seems as though he had disposed of all his rights, titles and interests in the premises, to unprincipled speculators. Many people now begin to understand that men — *all* men have immortal souls, and spiritual bodies — eyes and ears whereby they can discern the falsity of much popular logic and theological guidance. As fast as the opaque and dusty scab-covering are "rapped off" of these, they will come into use. When this work is done, there will come an end of so much wringing of hands, and gnashing of teeth, as have made hideous the hard life-struggle of humanity, to such imperfect democracy as it can at present comprehend. These will be found and used; and then will commence such a social re-organization, reform and progress, as the world has never seen. Then will men be saved the necessity and expense of charity antiseptics to save the body from starvation, gangrene and death. Then shall reform come truthfully and in earnest, and life be a seeing and doing of God-realities; and man shall no longer deny his relationship to the spiritual or the "necessity" for its manifestations, or refuse to be his brother's keeper. Then it will be no longer possible to write the

history of the world, as Parker says, in three words, after this manner, — "Cain killed Abel."

But ere such conditions come to pass, I know the world must rough-and-tumble on after its old manner, for a season, with its insane mummeries about politics and religion, shaping its institutions to its unhappy circumstances, and showing itself as well as it can in harmony with its accustomed toiling and thinking, pictured in its mole-eyed vision, and obscured by the dusty draperies and integuments of superstition and ignorance. It must yet awhile move on under "due laws of war," and the Cain-killed-Abel principles instead of mutual helpfulness. It will awhile longer rove the old beaten tracks, ere it learns the wisdom and necessity of providing for the hungry and naked, or rather of helping them to provide for themselves, — ere they come under the obligations of sinking down exhausted in "typhus" and other malignities — ere it gets its racks nailed to the walls, and men fear nothing but ignorance and wrong-doing — ere face can meet face in earnest, with godlike utterance of sight and speech, of faith and reason.

Courage, my brother! the "law remains the same," and the "necessity" about that. Let men depart far and wide from the laws of nature, yet nature never lets go her hold. She brings him back, *volens volens*, to her communion. It is no use to show Jew's parchments in her concil-rooms. Her Divine Revelations are over and above all other authority. They are fixed, steadfast and eternal; and let what else will, go, they will never depart. Her laws are God's thoughts, and will never go; nor will the necessity for instructions in new readings thereof. Heavenly instructors in her stern veracities may, and should, call us evermore to duty and obedience.

Since the days of the so-called inspiration of men, there has not been so propitious a time for spiritual manifestations and directions, to move the world out of its melancholy way, as the present. Many men are now developed to freedom of manly stature for such communion, unmindful of devils and witches. They see "necessities" enough; they hear from all points of the earth going up Heaven-moving cries for redress of grievances; for they know that these unredressed will become terrible earth-moving ones, some day not very distant. They see there must be a great levelling *up* of the *lowest*, or there will come a great levelling down of the higher — that things must cease conformity with antiquity, and shake hands with something higher and better — that men must be treated like men in the sight of one common Father — that the world will never reach its millennium day on any other philosophy — that quacks, wranglers and demagogues must be made to swallow their own infallible nostrums, and let the world recover itself in a less effective way — that we may as well hang our harps upon the willows and sit down and listen to the melancholy dirges of the winds played upon their neglected strings, as to think of recovering on the old nauseating febrifuges and opiates — that such as have true and loving hearts, and giant souls, can only be successful physicians, do the great work of enlightening the world, and congregating it around its Sinais, where the weary and heavy laden may find rest, and listen to new commandments and revelations, and experience newness of life.

Now, then is the time for such to speak and labor, and kindle new fires on the world's neglected altars, and light men to a knowledge of the true God, of his laws by which alone they can work righteously. Every where the oppressed plead incessantly for some "pain-killer" for their bleeding wounds. Let the banner of God be unfurled from the heavens, and let the brave and stouthearted, who know no "logic versus eyes and ears," rally under the folds, and go forth conquering all hindrances in the way to higher mansions in the Temple of Nature; till knowledge of wisdom is scattered amongst all nations, kindreds and tongues; and error and oppression shall be cast away. Then shall mercy, love and justice be the warp and woof of a band to bind humanity in one universal brotherhood. Then shall angel trumpets wake all its ears to the voice of parental love, which says

evermore, "cease your wanderings and be at peace." Then shall they make music, whilst man dwells lovingly with truth and holiness, waiting patiently for the feast prepared, where music from the full-strung harp of Heaven, swept by angel fingers, shall make melody for this dancing and joyousness in honor of the return of the last wanderer from his Father's house.

Yea let the spirit come.

And thank the Lord for all their ways and means,
To clear away our heaven-and-earth between.

Let them come, for so we have positive knowledge of the immortality of the soul. These means have done more, for the last five years, to abolish skepticism, and bring men to a knowledge of that great and most important truth, than all the world's preaching could have done in as many hundred. Man has had bad counsellors and masters, in one form or another, full too long between him and his Father. These have been, too often, wicked and selfish, robbing him of his inheritance and cruelly tasking him for their pleasure and gain; and now there is "necessity" enough that there should come a speedy ending of such misdirections, and that he should have other and more profitable guidance and treatment, even such counsellors as come with trumpets to announce the advent of world-redeemers and saviours.

Billerica, March 1856.

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